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still. It says, 'that the Christians already kept the right day—that is, the Sunday, or our Lord's day—and had altered already the ordinary Sabbath into the same, IS PLAIN BY THE SCRIPTURES, and by antiquity.'"[k] "Well," says Andy, "I don't know what to make of it. Dr. Milner, and Keenan, and many other of our writers, say that it can't be proved by Scripture; and ever since I was a boy I've heard that point thrown in the teeth of Protestants, and brought as an objection to their rule of faith." "True for you," says the Reader; "and now you see what a poor objection it is. You see that two editions of your own Bible, and Dr. Doyle, and the Catechism of the Council of Trent, all agree that it CAN be proved by Scripture. This ought to teach you, boys," says he, "what poor safety you have in building your faith on Dr. Milner, instead of on the Word of God. But before we go to any other point," says he, "tell me honestly, do you give up that objection to our rule of faith?" So Andy admitted that he did, and the boys all allowed that the change of the Sabbath is to be found in Scripture. "Well," says Andy, "there's another doctrine of great importance that's not contained in Scripture—I mean infant baptism. You Protestants baptise infants just as we do, but you've no authority for it but tradition." "You're quite wrong," says the Reader; "we've Scripture for it." "Why," says Andy, "just listen to Father Keenan. Speaking of infant baptism he says, 'Here, then, we have a truth upon which the salvation of one-third part of the whole human race depends which is not to be found in Scripture;'[l] and the 'Question of Questions'[m] says the same." "Well," says the Reader, "it's a curious thing to see how your writers contradict one another. Just look at the index at the end of your Douay Bible, and you'll find that it refers you to two VERSES OF SCRIPTURE in proof of infant baptism. And, again," says the Reader, "in the Catechism of the Council of Trent there's a chapter headed, 'Infants by all means to be baptised:'[n] and how do you suppose that the point is proved?" "By tradition, I suppose," says Andy. "No," says the Reader, "but by TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE;[o] and what's more," says he, "they're the very texts that we bring forward ourselves." "Well," says Jerry, "it's a most surprising thing that our writers go against one another that way. There's Milner saying one thing, and the Council of Trent saying another, and there's Keenan making one statement, and the Douay Bible contradicting him; 'troth myself doesn't know what to make of them." "But," says Andy, "a man who was against infant baptism wouldn't allow that those texts proved it." "I admit that," says the Reader; "but remember that your writers are not against it, they only bring it forward as an objection against our rule of faith. They say, You hold infant baptism, and you're right in doing so; but you've no authority for it in the Bible. Now, isn't it a fair answer when I show you that your own Bible, and your own Catechism, allow that the doctrine has the authority of Scripture, and that the proofs they bring forward are not traditions, but TEXTS OUT OF THE BIBLE." Well, sir, the boys allowed that 'twas fair, and the Reader says to Andy, "Before we go any further, tell me do you give up that objection to our rule of faith?" So Andy had to admit that he should give it up; "but," says he, "I've not done with you yet. There's another most important doctrine that's not contained in Scripture." "What is it?" says the Reader. "The procession of the Holy Ghost," says he. "Arra what's that at all?" says one of the boys; "what's the meaning of the big word?" "Why," says Andy, "it means that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son, and Protestants allow it in their Creeds; but there's no proof of it in Scripture;[p] and they've to come to our traditions after all, which proves that their rule is defective." "Well," says the Reader, "you Roman Catholics are the queerest people I ever met. You don't care about overturning your own doctrines, if you think 'twill upset us. Do you know," says he, "that you're going right against your own Church when you say that the procession of the Holy Ghost isn't contained in Scripture. Look at the Catechism of the Council of Trent,"[q] says he, "and you'll find that it refers you to eight TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE for proof of this doctrine; and remark," says the Reader, "that although it says that the doctrine is propounded by the Church, still it's by the texts it proves it, and not by tradition. And, again," says the Reader, "listen to this note in your own Bible:[r] 'THIS proves' (not tradition, mind, but the text) 'against the modern Greeks that the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Son as well as from the Father.' Now," says the Reader, "what have you to say for yourself?" Well, sir, Andy hadn't a word in his mouth. So the Reader turns to the boys, and, says he, "Is my rule clear from that objection?" "'Tis," says they, "for, sure our own Bible says that it's proved by Scripture." "Well," says Andy, "there's one more doctrine that Keenan says isn't proved in Scripture. He says, 'the doctrine of the Trinity, a doctrine the knowledge of which is certainly necessary to salvation, is not explicitly and evidently laid down in Scripture.'[s] "Well," says the Reader, "I see that it's nearly all up with you when you bring that objection against the Bible. In the Catechism of the Council of Trent," says he, "there's several pages of the beginning of the book taken up with proving the doctrine of the Trinity. It proves separately[t] the divinity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And how do you suppose it proves these points?" "By tradition, of course," says Andy. "No," says the Reader; "but by texts of Scripture. And, again," says he, "just look at the index in the end of the Douay Bible, and to what does it refer you for proof of this doctrine?" "I suppose to tradition," says Andy. "No," says the Reader, "but to different TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE. There," says he, "you can look at it for yourself." Well, sir, I never seen a man so vexed as Andy was. "May I never," says he, "but I give up Milner, and Keenan, and the whole pack of them, as the greatest rogues I ever came across. I spent the whole day," says he, "in making up those points, and it's too bad to find that when I bring them forward I'm only running my head against my own Bible." "Troth," says Jerry, "you remind me of the master's bull: he made a run at me the other day, and he was so eager to put his horns into me that he didn't think of the halter that was round his neck until it almost choked him, and, in like manner," says he, "you were so eager to put down the Protestant rule of faith, that you never thought of what you were doing until the Douay Bible pulled you up, and if it didn't choke you," says he, "it stopped your mouth, anyhow." "Stop your jaw," says Andy, "or, by the powers, I'll be after making you do it." And then he turns to the Reader, and, says he, "I'll be at you again some other night, for I've plenty of other objections against your rule of faith." "Very good," says he, "I'll listen, fairly, and I'll do my best to answer them, and then," says he, "'twill be my turn to discuss your rule of faith." And whenever they meet again I'll let your honour know.

Your humble servant to command, DAN CARTHY.

[k] Note to Acts xx. 16, Douay Bible, 4to edition, approved of by the Most Reverend Dr. Troy; printed and published by Richard Coyne, Dublin, 1816. [l] Controversial Catechism, chap v., sec. 5. [m] By Rev. Joseph Mumford, of the Society of Jesus, section viii., par. 3. [n] Part II., chap. II., question xxxi. [o] Matt. xix. 14; Mark x. 16; I. Cor. i. 16; Acts xvi. 15 and 33. [p] "Question of Questions," section viii., par. i. [q] Part I. chap. ix., question vi. [r] Note to John xv., 26. [s] Chap. v., sec. v.

[t] We do not give references, as the argument extends over several pages.

HOLY CLAY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—In many parts of the County Meath, and indeed throughout Ireland generally, I am led to believe that it is customary for the priest to put "holy clay" between the lips of the dying or dead Roman Catholics. A priest, on being asked whether such was the fact, admitted "it was true that 'holy clay' was sometimes put into the *coffin* of dead Roman Catholics, in cases of interment in unconsecrated ground, or with Protestants, but that otherwise it was not used." Now, I wish to know if this reason be the only one given, and whether the poor people can get the "clay" without money and without price? how it is made "holy," and whether it be placed in the mouth of the dying, or in the coffin of the dead? It is chiefly for an English friend I seek this information—one who points to Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life"—one who bears most willing and unsolicited testimony to the spirit of love in which the CATHOLIC LAYMAN is conducted, and who *almost* prophetically, in connection with it, writes—"Truth is mighty, and *must* prevail."

Apologising for thus intruding on your valuable time and space, and anxiously awaiting whatever explanation you or your Roman Catholic correspondents may be able to give of the above subject,

I am, sir, E. H. T.

We never heard of blessed clay being put between the lips of the dying, and we do not believe it. Blessed clay is often put in coffins. On one occasion in the famine, when many corpses were to be buried from a workhouse in Meath, a priest sent a boy with a bag of blessed clay, to be put in the coffins. The clay dropped out through a hole in the bag. The boy filled the bag from a ploughed field. Can any one tell how the present condition of those souls may be affected by this accident? We do not know the form of blessing the clay.

MIRACLES WITH AN EYE TO BUSINESS.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR,—Some months ago you called public attention to the profitable trade connected with the imposture of La Salette.

Allow me to call your attention to a new crop of miracles which have lately furnished matter for the imperial journals in France.

I allude to a Saint Anne, whose remains appear to have been found in the department of Tarn et Garonne, in the commune of Vaudon, and the arrondissement of Moissac. She appeared on the 16th of August, 1853. Her body had been 104 years under ground; and she had been assassinated at the early age of twelve by two young men. There were fourteen stabs in her heart. She had been quiet over this story of her death upwards of a century, when she appeared to a tailor's wife, one Sunday, after mass, at the moment when the good soul was saying her prayers, as she tended her geese, at the roadside. A medal fell miraculously into her apron; but she could see no hand that could have cast it there. This was miracle number one only. The second was performed a few days after the first—St. Anne being apparently determined to make up for a century and four years of idleness. On this occasion a spring rose from the place where she was buried, and during four days was the colour of blood. It was the blood of St. Anne! From this time forward the saint devoted her intercessions to the miraculous cure of diseases. We now approach the curious—perhaps the instructive—part of this matter. These wonders have been given to the world in a volume published at Villefranche, by the Veuve Assan; and the author, after having excited the pious wonder of his readers, pushes boldly into details. To begin with, he has been himself cured by the saint of rheumatism, after doctors and medicaments (upon which his father had spent four hundred francs) had proved altogether useless. He was carried simply into the saint's chapel, and in eight days he was well. I now proceed to translate a passage from the volume itself:—"The curate of the place, and the bishop of Montauban, have employed this young man, aided by a companion, to spread abroad this little recital, because having been himself radically cured by the saint of several attacks of rheumatism, he was the proper person to describe the miracles she has wrought.

"Thus people are informed that any person who carries this book will be preserved from all kinds of diseases; from the plague, even from the thunder, and from bad spirits. Every person who buys ten sous' worth of goods from the vendor of this book will have a half mass in the chapel; while every purchaser to the value of twenty sous will have a mass in the chapel, the result of which will be, that its advantages will last, not for a day only, but, on the contrary, for all eternity. There are nine curates, whose duty it is to say nine masses and prayers for the purchasers of the present, either to the value of ten sous, or to that of twenty sous."

This arrangement of piety is ingenious. Commerce was never more completely allied with religion; pardons were never more openly sold. We live in an age of cheapness—of cheap dress, and cheap food, and cheap lodging. The age proudly points to the celebrated "good dinner for twopence" as a triumph of human ingenuity. We have arrived at a time when anything is good and acceptable, provided it is cheap. We are building up a new world on the grand principle that every man shall do his best to undersell his neighbour.

The vendor of St. Anne's miracles is a startling proof that salvation, at least, is not dear. To be lucky to all eternity, at the small charge of ten pence, must be regarded as a triumph of cheapness which throws the twopenny dinner already alluded to completely in the shade. And then, again, as the *Siècle*, commenting on St. Anne, remarks—"How delightful to make our own peace, and a poor man's fortune, at one blow! Nor is this all, for the young man who has been cured of rheumatism by St. Anne sells various wares, and for your twenty sous delivers over to you ribbon, or lace, or cotton; so that, in point of fact, he saves his customers gratis: he throws heaven into the bargain!"

That this is a serious "business," in which there appears to be two partners, is evident. Their saint is no more an impostor—that is, *they* are no more impostors, than dozens of most respectable ecclesiastics who have turned up some old provincial story, and concocted a new miracle upon it. Thus, among books received, the *Siècle* has the "*Célébration du Neuvième Anniversaire du Miracle de la Salette.*"

All these miracles, let the reader understand, are so many exhibitions to be turned to commercial account. Now that ecclesiastical lotteries are probably beginning to lose favour, miracles may be expected to turn up in considerable crops. No doubt, with the progress of education (as carried on now in France, under the priesthood), this business will increase, and, as it increases, induce enterprising speculators to invest money more boldly than the author of the St. Anne miracle. A man of genius, having a saint at command, would not content himself with a pamphlet, such as that I have quoted. He would develope the idea; send round "St. Anne"—a card; assure his readers that his saint, by a strict attention to business, hoped to secure the favour of old customers.

So much for the commercial part of the saint discoveries. If we turn to the moral aspect of affairs; if we seriously consider what the state of mind must be of people who believe in the impostors to whom I have drawn attention—the St. Anne of Tarn-et-Garonne story is one of the saddest it is possible to read. That the fellows who hawk heaven about the villages of France find customers is proved by the development already given to the St. Anne business. Nine priests ready to say mass at one franc a head, ribbons, lace, and cotton included!! Of course the hawkers will not be prosecuted—perhaps when they cast down their pack for the last time they may themselves become provincial saints. This hope must be a comfort to them that hawk St. Anne up hill and down dale, blighting, with their degrading imposture, the souls of all who come in contact with them. And to think that fellows of this stamp should be able to trudge profitably through a country where the white feathers of civilising steam are a hopeful feature in every landscape. But there are animals—and they are generally somewhat loathsome—that are difficult to kill. Among these the most loathsome are the reptiles in whose grasp is the story of St. Anne. Is the Bishop of Montauban really their patron? I am not easily astonished by Roman Catholic revelations; but if the bishop be with the hawkers, he is a bold man.

Your obedient servant, A SUBSCRIBER.